

Import (Read) and Export (Write) Data out of MetaTrader 4

It is time to connect with the outside world.

Importing (aka reading) data entails bringing in numbers or strings from files outside of MT4.

Exporting (aka writing) data entails sending out numbers or strings to files outside of MT4.

Why Read and Write

Read

We read data from external sources to help us in the trading process. Examples:

- Get data on economics figures (interest rate, inflation rate etc) for our trading strategy
- Get data on assets that are not available in MT4
- Get information from analysis that were done outside of MT4 (Analysis using big data or machine learning models on Python, R etc)
- Get data from another trading platform

As you can see, this can drastically open more options for us in terms of strategy design. We are no longer limited to information from MT4.

Write

Generally, we write data out to store data or to conduct further analysis using software other than MT4. Examples:

- Store data (prices, bid-ask spread, volume, indicator information, pending and closed trades etc)
- Send data out to conduct analysis (analysing the market, analysing our trades and performance etc)
- Send data to another trading platform

How to Read and Write

We will touch on this in the next few lectures.

Types of Files we can Read from and Write to

We can use files of the format or encoded in csv, txt, ANSI, Unicode. We shall focus on csv in this course. If you are keen to learn more about ANSI and Unicode, check out the appendix.

Appendix

ANSI:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Windows_code_page,

<https://stackoverflow.com/questions/701882/what-is-ansi-format>

Unicode:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unicode>